



News Release

Pat Quinn, Governor

For Immediate Release
April 17, 2014

Jay Rowell, Director

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March Unemployment Hits Five Year Low 8.4 Percent Lowest Since January 2009

CHICAGO – The March unemployment rate fell to 8.4 percent, the lowest level since January 2009, according to data released today by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Illinois Department of Employment Security. The rate fell despite more people entering the labor force to look for work.

As expected, however, the unseasonably cold and snowy weather in March dampened initial estimates for new hiring. Combined with continued job loss at the government level, the state recorded -3,200 fewer jobs than in February but +29,400 more than one year ago. The unemployment rate and job creation numbers can move independently of each other because they come from different surveys.

“Today’s drop in the unemployment rate highlights significant progress in our state,” IDES Director Jay Rowell said. “Our monthly numbers will continue to show uneven but measurable progress. Consumer confidence and its related spending remains a key driver of our economic growth, especially in construction and manufacturing.”

Numbers from the independent [Conference Board’s](#) Help Wanted OnLine Survey show Illinois employers in March advertised for more than 195,000 jobs and 85 percent sought full-time employment. The Board is a global business membership and research association. The numbers measure new, first-time online jobs and jobs reposted from the previous month on internet job boards, corporate boards and smaller, niche websites.

Illinois employers added +257,000 private sector jobs since January 2010 when job growth returned following nearly two years of consecutive monthly declines. Leading sectors are Professional and Business Services (+119,900, +15.3percent); Education and Health Services (+56,600, +6.9 percent); and Leisure and Hospitality (+40,200, +7.8 percent). Government (-26,500, -3.1 percent) continues to lead job loss.

In March 2014, the number of unemployed individuals fell -17,100 (-3.0 percent) to 551,900. Total unemployed has fallen -201,600 (-26.8 percent) since January 2010 when the rate peaked at 11.4 percent.

Since January 2010, when compared to the previous month, Illinois recorded job growth in 35 months and job loss in 15. The unemployment rate fell in 25 months, increased in nine and was unchanged in 16.

The unemployment rate identifies those who are out of work and seeking employment. A person who exhausts benefits, or is ineligible, still will be reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work. Historically, the national unemployment rate is lower than the state rate. The state rate has been lower than the national rate only six times since January 2000. This includes periods of economic expansion and contraction.

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Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

	Mar 2014	Feb 2014	Mar 2013 *	3-Month Moving Avg.
Illinois	8.4%	8.7%	9.2%	8.6%
U.S.	6.7%	6.7%	7.5%	6.7%

* Revised

Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Non-farm Jobs – by Major Industry

Industry Title	March* 2014	February** 2014	March 2013	Over the Month Change	Over the Year Change	3-Month Moving Avg.	Change From Previous 3-Month Mov. Avg.
Total Nonfarm	5,814,900	5,818,100	5,785,500	-3,200	29,400	5,814,300	-4,300
Mining	9,700	9,700	9,700	0	0	9,700	0
Construction	191,500	194,300	189,900	-2,800	1,600	193,400	200
Manufacturing	573,600	574,900	582,700	-1,300	-9,100	574,500	-1,700
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1,155,900	1,157,100	1,160,000	-1,200	-4,100	1,158,500	-6,300
Information	98,200	96,900	98,900	1,300	-700	97,600	-200
Financial Activities	369,100	368,400	367,700	700	1,400	368,600	-200
Professional and Business Services	903,600	905,700	879,900	-2,100	23,700	901,200	4,600
Educational and Health Services	879,900	878,900	873,900	1,000	6,000	879,100	-500
Leisure and Hospitality	552,400	548,100	542,800	4,300	9,600	548,500	1,300
Other Services	250,900	253,100	249,300	-2,200	1,600	252,700	-900
Government	830,100	831,000	830,700	-900	-600	830,500	-600

*Preliminary

**Final

Notes:

- Illinois monthly labor force, unemployed and unemployment rates for years 2009-2013 have been revised as required by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In February of each year, monthly labor force data for all states are revised to reflect updated sum-of-states controls, Census population controls, seasonal factors, non-farm jobs and unemployment insurance claims inputs. Data were also smoothed to eliminate large monthly changes as a result of volatility in the monthly household (CPS) survey. Comments and tables distributed in prior Illinois unemployment rate news release materials should be discarded because any analysis, including records, previously cited might no longer be valid.
- Seasonally adjusted employment data for subsectors within industries are not available. For not seasonally adjusted jobs data with greater industry detail, go to http://www.ides.illinois.gov/Custom/Library/Statistic/CES/I_NSA_CES_Illinois_MSAs_Jobs_2000_to_Current.XLS.
- “Other Services” includes a wide range of activities in three broad categories: Personal and laundry; repair and maintenance; and religious, grant making, civic and professional organizations.
- Monthly seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for Illinois and the Chicago-Naperville-Joliet Metropolitan Division are available at: <http://www.ides.illinois.gov/page.aspx?item=2509>.

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